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CRYPTANDRA UNCINATA (F. MUELL. EX BAILLON) GRÜN. IS A SYNONYM OF *EREMOPHILA STURTII* R. BR.

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Abstract

Cryptandra uncinata (F. Muell. ex Baillon) Grün. is shown to be a synonym of *Eremophila sturtii* R. Br. and the history of the former epithet is described.

Taxonomic History

The taxonomy of the species *Cryptandra uncinata* (F. Muell. ex Baillon) Grün. has been controversial. The species is represented by two specimens of a collection by F. Mueller, one at K and the other at MEL. The author has examined the latter specimen, which was labelled by F. Mueller as "*Beyeria viscosa* var. *unicata*". The first formal description was by Baillon (1865-1866) who published it as "*Beyeria? uncinata*". However, he also noted that "this specimen may not belong to this genus; because of the thick cylindric leaves without reflexed margins and above all because of the thin calyx which is in no way joined to the ovary and the completely caducous style, it is very distinct. Because of the lack of male flowers, its placement in the genus should be very uncertain".

Bentham (1873) also referred to *Beyeria uncinata* but was critical of some of the distinguishing characters used by Baillon: "the thinner calyx-segments, more free from the ovary, and the very caducous stigma". Bentham commented that these distinctions were "scarcely warranted by the specimens".

In his revision of the genus *Beyeria*, Grüning (1912) transferred this species to *Cryptandra* noting that the structures which previous taxonomists had interpreted as elongated capsules were "almost spherical hermaphrodite flowers, the construction of which indicates Rhamnaceae" rather than Euphorbiaceae. However, he did not list flower characters which had influenced his decision.

Distribution

Although Baillon (1865-1866) referred to the type locality as "Murray Desert", as appears on the type specimen in MEL, Tate (1883) instead referred to "Murray Scrub near the Great Bend" as the collection locality. However, Canning (1986) notes that "search [in this area] has proved unsuccessful". Leigh, Briggs & Hartley (1981) listed the species as presumed extinct, being known only from the type collection and of uncertain taxonomic status.

Discussion

The type specimen of *Cryptandra uncinata* in MEL consists of a vegetative stem, leaf fragments and an envelope containing three galled flower buds, one partially dissected. A diagram by Grüning of a dissected flower bud is mounted with the specimen. However, this diagram is not consistent with the flower buds enclosed with the specimen, the diagram showing some floral parts which apparently had not developed in the buds due to galling. The specimen is exstipulate and stems have a covering of dried resin.

No resin vesicles or protruberances are evident on the specimen, but the coating of dried resin on the stem is consistent with that often seen in Myoporaceae and certain genera of Euphorbiaceae (e.g. *Beyeria*). This would be less likely in *Cryptandra* or Rhamnaceae in general.

The scant, mostly vegetative, material of the specimen agrees with the description of *Eremophila sturtii* given by Chinnock (1986) and with herbarium material in AD. Significant points are the resinous coating of the stem, leaf size and form (especially the apical hook) and the pedicels. Sepals are smaller than those usually seen in *E. sturtii*, but are consistent with those seen on galled buds, which are present on a considerable number of specimens of the species. Chinnock has examined the material and supports this identification. Thus, *Cryptandra uncinata* is considered to be a synonym of *Eremophila sturtii*.

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